DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 337 366 SO 021 075

AUTHOR Faichney, Gavin W.
TITLE Soaps and Sitcoms as Socialization: The Role of Television in Citizenship Education.
PUB DATE Nov 90
NOTE 19p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the National Council for the Social Studies (70th, Anaheim, CA, November 16-19, 1990).
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Children; Childrens Television; *Citizenship Education; Elementary Education; *Elementary School Students; Foreign Countries; Foreign Culture; Mass Media Use; Social Development; Social Influences; *Socialization; *Television; Television Research
IDENTIFIERS *Australia

ABSTRACT

The effect that television programs have on the socialization of children is examined. As traditional sources of socialization have declined, and children's viewing of television has dramatically increased, it is important to consider just what children are learning from television programs about the world and their place in it. A study of the programs most watched by Australian elementary school children was undertaken. The most-watched program, "Neighbours," a soap opera, is discussed in comparison with a program very popular in the United States, "The Cosby Show," a situation comedy. A scene from each show is analyzed. Citizenship teachers need to help students negotiate the meanings of television programs so students can develop the skills and knowledge necessary to participate effectively in the social world of which they are a part. A 15-item bibliography is included, as well as appendices that contain transcripts of the dialogue from the television scenes analyzed. (DB)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED337366

SOAPS and SITCOMS as SOCIALIZATION:

The Role of Television in Citizenship Education.

Paper presented at the 70th NCSS Annual Meeting
November 16-19, 1990.

Anaheim, CA.

"Opening Pathways to Citizenship: Teaching Social Studies in a Diverse and Changing Nation".

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☒ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

GAVIN W. FAICHNEY

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

Gavin W. Faichney,
Department of Social Sciences,
VICTORIA COLLEGE - Burwood,
Melbourne. AUSTRALIA.

SO 021 075

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

SOAPIES AND SITCOMS AS SOCIALIZATION:
The Role of Television in Citizenship Education.

> "The real success of any TV show is best measured not so much by how long it runs, but by how much space it takes in the psyche of its viewers." (Schembri, 1989, p1.)

As Dunn reminds us, when writing of her research experiences as a member of the Suffolk Education Authority with Pre-school and Junior Primary children:

> "For the first time in our history, almost all the children of this country, whatever their parentage, wealth, intelligence . . . may watch and hear the same things said and shown to them by the same people." (Dunn, 1980, p47.)

That a similar situation exists in Australia and, possibly in this country, would be difficult to deny, at least for those living in the major urban centres. White, a former lecturer and writer and producer for both radio and television, reminds us that in Australia's case:

> ". . . of all the media, television is the most pervasive. In capital cities it is available 24 hours a day. It reaches over 95% of Australian homes. . . . Television is a dominant feature of our national life." (White, 1990, p11.)

As the review conducted by Hepburn and reported in *Social Education* earlier this year tells us:

> "As a source of news, information and political imagery, the mass media heavily influence public opinion and citizen decisions and, consequently, public policy. Some consider television to be currently the most powerful citizen educator." (Hepburn, 1990, p234.)

It is the contention of this paper however, that it is not only in the fields of news and information that television is influential, but also with regard to our participation in the social world of which we are a part. With the decline in significance of some of the traditional sources of socialization, the question arises as to what extent the medium of television is now assisting our young people to develop their social roles, patterns of interaction and values . White reminds us that:

> "One of the most important effects of television is that it sets our 'social agenda'. In other words, it influences quite profoundly what we think and talk about." (White, 1990, p11.)

Luker and Johnston in their discussion of the role of television in adolescent social development point out that:

> "Healthy adolescent social development depends on exposure to fulfilling social experiences. The best way to explore adult life is through personal experience and social interaction in the real world. . . . In circumstances where access to social experience is blocked, watching television can be instrumental to social development . . ." (Luker and Johnston, 1988. p350.)

My own enquiries have been carried out with elementary school-age children and their interest in, and involvement with television, in a recreational sense, would tend to indicate the importance of this medium, with regard to the development of their understandings of the world around them.

In the introduction to their book, *CHILDREN AND TELEVISION*, Hodge & Tripp tell us that :

> "Television sends out messages, which are interpreted and acted on by social agents responsible for their actions. Television communicates meaning. ... If television affects behaviour, it can only do so very indirectly via meanings, beliefs, values." (Hodge & Tripp, 1986, p2.)

The question of how children interpret these messages, '*making sense of whatever they watch*', is of concern to us as educators and teachers. Meyrowitz reminds us that;

> "people, even young children, are not passive recipients of or reactors to media stimuli; rather they are purposive and conscious selectors of the messages that fulfil personal needs." (Meyrowitz, 1985, p14.)

We need to know what needs are being filled by the programs they watch? As well as **knowledge about the world around them maybe it is knowledge of how to act in that world** which they are obtaining from such shows. In particular, the 'Australian Soapies' are using **teenage role models to resolve issues** which they believe ordinary people face. It is anticipated that these heroes and heroines may offer strategies and resolutions to such difficulties and social relationships.

It is in this context then that we need to be cognisant of the challenge that Potter offers;

> "If television is another productive and relevant way to help students understand their world, the question about it seems not to be SHOULD WE USE IT? The question is WHICH ARE THE BEST WAYS?" (Potter, 1982, p209.)

It would appear that such television could be a useful resource in Social Education programs. Masterman, in his book *Teaching About Television* , tells us that;

> "Social Education is most fundamentally an enabling process through which pupils may acquire an understanding of the social groupings and relationships of which they are a part, and the social abilities through which they can act ..." (Masterman, 1980, p176.)

It is the extent to which television programs contribute to the social education and entertainment of young audiences, giving them skills and knowledge to participate in the social groupings and the society of which they are a part, that will determine their popularity. It is our challenge and indeed in our interest, to realise the full potential of this medium and use it as a resource in our teaching.

In Australia our television industry is regulated by the **Australian Broadcasting Tribunal.** This organisation is a statutary authority responsible to the Federal Parliament of Australia and whose role it is to grant licences for broadcasting to **commercial network** owners and to regulate for broadcasting in the interests of the public.

One aspect of this concerns television programming for children. A Standing Committee of the Tribunal - **the Children's Program Committee** - has developed a set of criteria for classifying programs for people younger than 14 years of age. Each commercial network is required to show at least 390 hours per year of approved children's programming. (See Appendix I).

These programs however, as will be indicated later, do not appear to be among the favourite shows of children, and to restrict our consideration of the role of television in the social education of children to C or P classified programs only would be too limiting.

If we are going to discuss the question of children's television we might do well to consider the definition that Hodge and Tripp have developed in their work, *Children and Television: A Semiotic Approach* ;

"Children's television is not simply shows made for children. It is the sense children make of whatever they watch. Almost invariably children's shows are made by adults, and children's television equally invariably includes shows that were made for adults." (Hodge & Tripp, 1986, p.7.)

Australian television is broadcast nationally via;
cable linking the capital city transmitting stations,
a national satellite system
a series of regional channels.
There are three commercial networks and two national public broadcasting networks - one specialising in providing foreign language programming.

The commercial networks operate for 24 hours a day and offer the usual range of programming - news, current affairs, sport (international and local), dramas, sitcoms, soaps, international news services (from the United States), variety programs, game shows, films, documentaries, magazine programs, midday talk shows, cartoons and children's shows.

In an attempt to answer the question of **what television children watch** a group of Year II social science major students conducted some research during May last year, in 15 of the Training Schools used by Victoria College. The sample consisted of 353 children (160 boys and 193 girls) spread among 16 classes across all year levels and ranging in age from four and a half to twelve years.

PROGRAM	RESPONSE	%age	RANKING
NEIGHBOURS	59	16.70	1
HOME & AWAY	41	11.60	2
INSPECTOR GADGET	22	6.20	3
COMEDY COMPANY	21	5.90	4
A COUNTRY PRACTICE	17	4.80	5
GILIGAN'S ISLAND	16	4.50	6
DOUBLE DARE	12	3.30	7
DISNEYLAND	10	2.80	8
SESAME STREET	9	2.50	9
RAGS TO RICHES	8	2.20	10
Remainder		39.10	
FAMILY TIES	7		11
LASSIE	6		=12
MISSION IMPOSSIBLE	6		=12

Table 1 OVERVIEW OF SURVEY RESPONSES

The most popular program with this group of children was *Neighbours* with 16.77% of the sample nominating it as their

The most popular program with this group of children was *Neighbours* with 16.77% of the sample nominating it as their favourite program. As indicated in the table above, together with *Home and Away,* the second most popular choice with 11.65% and the fifth favourite *A Country Practice,* with 4.82%, one third of the sample group indicated a preference for Australian produced 'soapies', which are shown immediately after the NEWS, in the C band time and are what is known as family viewing, ie between 7.00 and 8.30pm.

There are two questions that arise immediately from the consideration of such data.

In the first place what is the appeal of such programs to a sample of 353 children with an average age of 7.9 years? The answer to such a question is of course of vital concern to the television industry, particularly to those whose responsibility it is, to decide on which programs to broadcast. It is also of interest to those involved in the production of programs which they wish to sell to television networks.

Secondly, and more importantly from the point of view of this discussion, we need to ask what sort of understanding/perspective is this child audience developing of the social world around them, of which they are a part? To this question we, as developers of Citizenship programs, need to seek answers.

As well, there might be wider implications. What are the possibilities of this, for the models of Child Development on which much of our planned educational experiences for children are based?

For the purposes of our discussion we shall consider briefly an example of an American 'sitcom' - *The Cosby Show* - and an Australian 'soap' - *Neighbours* - in order to identify the possible social learnings that such programs offer.

These two programs were selected for consideration in this paper because in the survey above, *Neighbours* was the program that had most appeal in terms of 'favourite show' and as indicated below it also rated very well in Britian earlier this year.

Kingsley, a noted British media critic, and author of *SOAP BOX: The Australian Guide To Television Soap Operas,* tells us that;

> ". . . the essence of soap opera is this: It must be a continuing story with a family background . . . It must not deal with ideas but with feelings and emotions. Above all it must be seamless, endless. Problems arise, problems are solved. Danger appears, danger is averted.

> Love arises, love dies. But always the central story must flow on . . . " (Kingsley, 1989, p1.)

Kingsley further describes the characteristics of soap opera as never questioning eternal verities. The boundaries of conventional morality may be pressed, however, the goodies and the baddies are always clearly defined and the flouting of morality is utilised as a means of clarifying and reinforcing the 'normal' standards of behaviour. In addition, the setting and characters must always seem realistic. The storyline centres around problems and the conflict that arises from them, which, in turn, creates further problems - concern for children, infidelity, money problems, paternity uncertainty, childlessness, loneliness, betrayal.

> "What soap does is to parade problems we either have or that we fear having." (Kingsley, 1989, p2.)

Neighbours is the Australian epitomy of soap operas. It is set in middle-class suburban Melbourne, and revolves around the lives of three families from differing socio-economic backgrounds who, never-the-less, live in their own homes on a quarter-acre block on which they are paying off their mortgages, with all the usual mod-cons, cars, swimming pools and barbeque areas that indicate a relaxed and comfortable, outdoor lifestyle. In true neighbourly, and completely classless, fashion which illustrates the great Australian concept of 'mateship', they share their lives and problems supporting each other through a variety of trials and tribulations.

> " 'Neighbours' tells of the mini-misunderstandings, rapid romances and hastily mended heartbreaks of the Robinsons, the Clarkes and the Ramseys, their lodgers and long-lost relatives, as they nip in and out of each other's homes in a leafy cul-de-sac in suburban Melbourne." (Kingsley, 1989, p238.)

Commencing in 1985, it has consistently rated well over the last five years, both in Australia and in Britain where, since 1988, it has displaced some of the long -running local soaps.

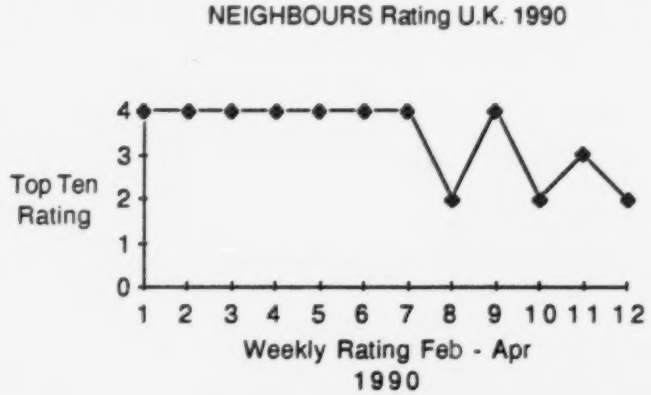

Chart 1 NEIGHBOURS

The rating information published in a Melbourne newspaper weekend magazine earlier this year indicated, that despite the reported slump in American television, *The Cosby Show* has maintained its prominance in the sitcom stakes and as Marc tells us;

> "*The Cosby Show* (NBC, 1984-present), surely the greatest hit of the 1980s, . . . offering a vision of a well-to-do inner-city black family living a life utterly compatible with the values and goals of the suburban middle classes." (Marc, 1989, p217.)

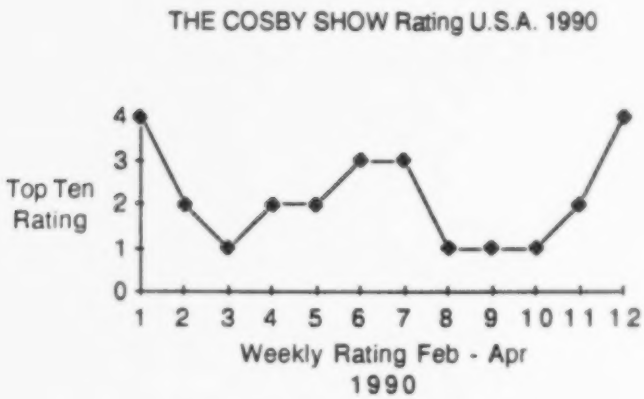

Chart 2 The Cosby Show

The 'sitcom' in many respects has much in common with 'soap operas'. As McMahon and Quin tell us;

> ". . . situation comedies . . . reflect life to us. [The] appearence of being true to life comes from the high degree of surface realism operating in these shows. The performance, dialogue, sets, costumes and plots all look real and conform to our notion of what is real. The realism of the 'sit-coms' is enhanced by the use of content that is perceived by us to be the stuff of everyday life - love, sex, family, quarrels, work, friends, life, death. Situation comedies appear to deal with the everyday and not the great questions of life." (McMahon and Quin, 1986, p211.)

Despite this similarity, there are two significant differences. In the first place, each episode is self-contained. Unlike 'soaps', the storylines are quite discrete - the situation in each episode is resolved by the end of the show or at least by the end of the following episode. Additionally, there is not usually more than one issue involved. This allows the 'family' to give their undivided attention to its solution and their whole, if at times lighthearted, support to their troubled kin. Whereas in soaps, the interplay

between a variety of subplots is an integral part of their appeal. Secondly the focus of these shows is comedy.

> "In situation comedy, disruption and discourse are conflated. The comedy of illogical and incompatible discourses, 'crazy' comedy, and the comedy of incompatible social codes, values, modes of interaction, 'social' comedy are derived from the same impulse. The mechanics of situation comedy are, then, to organise disruption in terms of discourse." (Moran, 1985, p182.)

The aim is to entertain the viewers by amusing them in terms of this disruption to the normal pattern of behaviour of the 'family' involved.

> "The shows tend to use the problems [of society] as a back drop, simply a setting, upon which the characters play out tightly constructed plots. The emphasis always remains on the characters and their motivations, emotions and interplay. . . . The format of a 'sit-com' depends upon finding something funny in the situation. To invoke laughter is to trivialise the problem and lessen its significance and potential threat." (McMahon and Quin, 1986, p213.)

Our consideration of these two programs is to determine their value in teaching about the skills and relationships associated with our participation in the social environment of which we and the students we teach are all members, ie their possible role in citizenship education. In so doing, White reminds us that;

> ". . . in looking at television critically it's vital to distinguish our personal program preferences from concerns about social values implicit in all television programs." (White,1990, p11.)

He emphasises this by drawing our attention to the positve aspects of such popular programs.

> "In fact, popular television programs often reflect positive concerns about individual and social well-being. . . . [such programs] deal with everyday problems of ordinary people." (White, 1990, p11.)

With this in mind, let us examine an episode of both of these 'programs of social commentary'. These episodes were chosen because they deal with similar social situations - relationships between teenagers. As Luker and Johnston remind us:

". . . As they [the teenagers] view, they can decide for themselves which behaviors are more likely to be rewarding should they encounter similar situations in life." (Luker and Johnston, 1988, p350.)

Whilst the dialogue that is played out in a particular scene of a television production is significant, it is only one of the inputs that a viewer receives. Dialogue is one aspect of the reality portrayed. (Appendices II and III provide a transcript of the scenes from the two shows under consideration here.) It provides us with an entree into our discussion of the social situation that is the subject of these particular episodes.

As we come to examine these scenes however, we become aware of additional codes that are utilised to reinforce the social reality. Not only are there technical codes which are the province of the show's directors, camera crew, sound, set and lighting technicians as well as the editors and videotape operators who produce the final version for broadcast, in addition there are the actors and actresses, the stunt people, the wardrobe people and the make-up crew all of whom contribute their experience, knowledge, skills and possibly cunning to the finished product which enthrals the viewing public. These people take the ideas of the producer, the writers, the researchers and the specialist advisors and utilize the techniques of script, location, set, lighting, sound, special computerised effects, characterization, dialogue and action to produce an entertaining storyline that realistically represents and fulfills the viewers expectations. As Fiske reminds us:

"[Television] is "realistic", not because it reproduces reality, which it clearly does not, but because it reproduces the dominant sense of reality. We can thus call television an essentially realistic medium because of its ability to carry a socially convincing sense of the real." (Fiske, 1987, p21.)

This is what White refers to when he expresses the comments often used by the industry in defending its position, at least with regard to the first sentence. The second sentence probably more truly reflects the 'hidden agenda' of the television industry.

"Television's programs reflect our dominant social values. They may reinforce, modify, and even change some of those values. But it is debatable whether television actually creates social values." (White, 1990, p21.)

As social/citizenship educators, each of these three sentences has a special significance for us.

The central problem in both shows is **the place of honesty** within a developing relationship between high school students.

In the *Neighbours* episode the 'honesty' is between the two participating in the relationship when there is a third party involved. In the style of 'soaps', an unexpected visitor from Gemma's past arrives and disrupts well-ordered plans. The original relationship between Gemma and Aden has dissipated as far as Gemma is concerned, a fact of which Aden is initially not aware, since she's 'been a little out of touch'. The situation is resolved in a convoluted manner involving Matt who befriends Aden, providing him with accommodation and some career advice.

That this incident is resolved within one episode is unusual in 'soaps'. The complete storyline is unimportant (except to the viewers), and typically has at least five other subplots - one of which mirrors this particular plot - that continue the series.

In *The Cosby Show*, Jeremy persuades Vanessa, against her better judgement, to be dishonest with her parents and break family rules regarding dating.

After some comedy centred on the evening meal from which Vanessa is absent and her little sister Rudi's attempts to maintain an alibi for Vanessa, which of course leads to the parent's discovery of the deception, the problem is resolved in normal 'sitcom' fashion with minimum fuss and some wholesome if somewhat unusual advice, with reference to apples, from the philosophical comedian - Bill Cosby. As Jeremy recognises the errors of his ways, calm returns to the household even though Vanessa is 'grounded for a month'.

In each case, the value of **honesty within relationships** is illustrated. This value is portrayed as important in the concept of *middle-class family life* . It is seen as central to maintenance of the family unit - a dominant ideological code of our society. The text of these television programs supports this social code.

As Luker and Johnston remind us:

> "These sources provide situations for observing romantically intimate situations generally unavailable outside the media. In the case of television viewing, although the characters in televised situations are seldom perceived as close friends . . . the experience of admired characters can provide some information . . . (Luker and Johnston, 1988, p352.)

In this case, as White contends, it is the reinforcement of values that is being undertaken. Luker and Johnston tell us that information from the media can be either of two forms. It can be used as a set of

criteria for personal or interpersonal experiences or it can provide data for conceptual development of knowledge. It is the former use that is of concern here.

Drama presented in the form of 'sitcoms' or 'soaps' may assist young people in developing or preparing for their experience in personal and/or interpersonal relationships. In this sense television acts as an agency of socialization in-so-far as it is relevant to the needs of the viewer. The focus of these sorts of programs is to present a view of the world that will find acceptance with the audience. It needs to reflect their expectations of the social world as they perceive it.

As Fiske reminds us:

> ". . . viewing television is typically a process of negotiation between the text and its variously socially instituted readers." (Fiske, 1987, p64.)

To appeal to a diverse mass audience programs must reflect an ideology that is acceptable across the spectrum of the society. As individuals read the text of the programs however, they will relate to that ideology only from the basis of understanding that their particular position within that spectrum enables.

> "Reading the television text is a process of negotiation between this existing subject position and the one proposed by the text itself, and in this negotiation the balance of power lies with the reader." (Fiske, 1987, p66.)

It is proposed here, that the role of social educators/teacher of citizenship, is to assist our students to read the text - negotiate the meanings - of those programs that will enable them - possibly 'sitcoms' and/or 'soaps' - to develop the skills and knowledge to participate effectively in the social world of which they are a part and for which they will increasingly be required to accept responsiblity.

> "By themselves, many of television's portrayals are too limited for students to learn much on their own. When they are discussed in class by a skilled teacher, however, they can be quite useful." (Luker and Johnston, 1988, p352.)

Such programs can be, and possibly are, a source of such knowledge both consciously and unconsciously for our students - they certianly watch them.

APPENDIX I.

CHILDREN'S TELEVISION STANDARDS
(As at January 1, 1990)

CTS 2 - Criteria for C and P Programs

---

2. A Children's program is one which:

(a) is made specifically for children or groups of children within the preschool or the primary school age range;

(b) is entertaining:

(c) is well produced using significant resources to ensure a high standard of script, cast, direction, editing, shooting, sound and other production elements;

(d) enhances a child's understanding and experience; and

(e) is appropriate for Australian children.

CTS 3 - Obligation of a licensee to broadcast C and P programs

---

A licensee must broadcast at least 390 hours of children's programs per year. It must include at least 130 hours of P programs and at least 260 hours of C programs per year. The licensee is required to elect a particular period or periods within the specified C bands for the broadcast of C programs and the elected period or periods cannot be changed without notice being given. At least a total of 130 hours per year shall be broadcast every weekday (Monday to Friday) between 4.30pm and 8.30pm. The remaining 130 hours per year shall be transmitted in a period between 4.30pm to 8.30pm Monday to Friday or between 7.00am to 8.30pm Saturdays or Sundays or school holiday weekdays.

APPENDIX II.

NEIGHBOURS

TEASER from Previous Episode:

Living room of Mrs Daniel's house, where Gemma is boarding. Gemma and her boyfriend Matt are sitting on the lounge, discussing plans for a holiday together. There is a knock at the front door. Mrs Daniels answers it off-screen and invites the visitor inside.

Matt: [*With his arm around Gemma's shoulders, kisses her forehead*].

Gemma: Hey, listen. How do you feel about a cruise for our holiday?

Matt: [*In surprise*] A cruise?

[*Voices off*]

Mrs Daniels: Hello. Can I help you?

Aden: Yes, I hope so. Some people outside said Gemma Ramsey was staying here.

Mrs Daniels: Yes, yes, she is.

[*Gemma starts, on hearing the voice. Matt withdraws his arm*].

Mrs Daniels: [*Standing back from the front door*] Um, Gemma, a visitor for you.

Aden: [*Entering through the front door*] Hi Gem! Didja miss me?

Gemma: [*Standing up*] Ahah, Aden !

Matt: [*Standing up*] Your boyfriend?

Aden: Got it in one.

Title and theme music.

OPENING SCENE:

The four of them stand in the centre of the Living Room.

Gemma: [*In some shock*]. What are you doing here?

Aden: You look great. [*Putting down his bag and advancing to hug Gemma*] Boy, have I missed you.

[*Matt turns away in annoyance*]

Gemma: [*Breaking from the hug*] Aden !

Aden: Awright ! I'm sorry.

Gemma: This is Mrs Daniels.

Mrs Daniels: [*Shaking his hand*] Oh, how do you do? Very nice to meet you.

Aden: I didn't mean to be rude Mrs Daniels. I've been looking forward to this, for quite a while.

Gemma: [*Accusingly*] You should have phoned.

Aden: Oh well I planned on being here yesterday. Birthday surprise, but the bus timetables aren't too reliable sometimes. Better late than never.

[*Pause*]

Matt: Seems like a long way to come just to surprise someone.

Aden: Oh, Gemma's worth it.

Gemma: Aden Devlin, this is Matt Ramsey.

Aden: [*Shaking hands*] Pleased to meet ya Matt.

Matt: G'day.

Gemma: Matt lives across the road.

Aden: Oh right. It'll be good to meet all your new friends. Gemma's been a little out of touch with me ever since she headed south.

Matt: [*A little perplexed*] Well you, you shoulda written to Aden. You know. Let him know how things are, here.

Gemma: [*Lamely*] I was going to.

Jim Robinson, a widowed pillar of Neighbour's society also living in Mrs Daniel's house, enters from the kitchen

Mrs Daniels: [*Attempting to cover the embarrasment*] Oh Jim, I'd like you to meet Aden Devlin, a friend of Gemma's, from Brisbane.

Jim: Oh, [*sticking out a dirty hand*] Jim Robinson. [*Recovering and shaking hands with a clean hand*] Jim Robinson. Ha ha! Are ya here to stay or are ya just passin' through?

Aden: [*Turning to look at Gemma*] We-ell, I came to find Gem. No reason to move on.

Jim: Oh-oh. [*Looking at Matt*] That should make things interesting around here. Uh! I'll just go and get the newspaper. [*Exits through the front door*]

Aden: [*Embarrased with the stiffness of the situation*] Have I come at a bad time or something? [*Looking questioningly at Gemma*]

Gemma: [*Covering up*] No, no. I just wished you had phoned or something. [*Slapping him in a friendly fashion on the arm*]

Matt: [*Looking exasperatedly at Gemma*] I'm sure Gemma can fill ya in on the goings on in good old Ramsey street.

APPENDIX III.

THE COSBY SHOW

OPENING SCENE:

Vanessa is meeting with her new boyfriend Jeremy after school in the student cafeteria. The opening shot sees Vanessa seated at a central table in the half-full cafeteria, using the napkin holder as a mirror to check her appearence.

Jeremy: I'm back.
Vanessa: Oh, ah, I was just getting a napkin.
Jeremy: You look beautiful.
Vanessa: Thankyou.
Jeremy: I got us another large order of fries.
Vanessa: Oh I can't. I really have to go.
Jeremy: C'mon, we're havin' a good time aren't we?
Vanessa: Yes.
Jeremy: So, be a little late.
Vanessa: But my parents . . .
Jeremy: Your parents see you all the time. We only spend a little time together each day. Stay. [*pleadingly*] I need you.
Vanessa: Jeremy if I'm late again, I'm really gonna get it.
Jeremy: Okay, then meet me back here tonight!
Vanessa: [*Giggles*] I have homework to do!
Jeremy: Do it in the morning before you go to school. I can't stand being away from you. Please [*pleadingly*] my sweet.
Vanessa: [*Giggles*] Okay, okay. I'll meet you back here at 8.30.
Jeremy: You promise? 'Cause i'm gonna be here!
Vanessa: Awright, awright. I promise. Now I really gotta go. Mm, mm. [Gives Jeremy a peck on the cheek]
Jeremy: Wait a minute, wait a minute, wa-it a minute. Now, now, what kinda kiss is that? I mean, that's the kinda kiss you give a friend.
Vanessa: Jeremy! [*in half-shocked tones*] There are people here.
Jeremy: So-o, Why should we care what people think of us?
[*Vanessa shrugs and then succumbs to a lingering kiss. Audience oohs and aahs.* }
Jeremy: [*Turning back to the table*] That was nice. That was really nice.
Vanessa: Bye! [*Heading towards the door*]
Jeremy: [*Calls after her*] See you at 8.30?
Vanessa: [*Going out the door*] Awright.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

DUNN Gwen, "Television and the Education of the Young." *Journal of Educational Television and Other Media,* Vol Vi, No 2, Summer, 1980.

FISKE John, *TELEVISION CULTURE.* Methuen & Co. Ltd, London, 1987.

HEPBURN Mary A., "Americans Glued to the Tube: Mass Media, Information, and Social Studies." *Social Education,* Vol 54, No 4, Apr-May, 1990.

HODGE Bob,} TRIPP David,} *Children and Television: A Semiotic Approach.* Polity Press, Cambridge, 1986.

KINGSLEY Hilary, *SOAP BOX: The Australian Guide To Television Soap Operas.* The Macmillan Company of Australia Pty Ltd, South Melbourne, 1989.

LUKE Carmen, *TV and Your Child.* Collins/Angus & Robertson Publishers Australia, North Ryde, 1990.

LUKER Richard,} JOHNSTON Jerome,} "TV and Teens: Television In Adolescent Social Development." *Social Education,* Vol 52, No 5, September, 1988.

McMAHON Barrie,} QUIN Robyn,} *REAL IMAGES: Film & Television.* The Macmillan Company of Australia Pty Ltd, South Melbourne, 1986.

MARC David, *COMIC VISIONS Television Comedy and American Culture.* Unwin Hyman Ltd, London, 1989.

MASTERMAN Len, *Teaching About Television.* The Macmillan Press Ltd, London, 1980.

MEYROWITZ Joshua, *No Sense of Place: The Impact of Electronic Media on Social Behavior.* Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1985.

MORAN Albert, *IMAGES & INDUSTRY: Television Drama Production in Australia.* Currency Press, Sydney, 1985.

POTTER Rosemary Lee, "The TV - Social Studies Connection: Where are We?" *Social Education,* Vol 46, No 3, March, 1985.

SCHEMBRI Jim, "Win Some, Lose Some." *The Age Green Guide,* October 13, 1989.

WHITE Jim, "Beyond the Looking Glass." *Nurture,* Vol 24, No 3, August-September, 1990.